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SOME SUGGESTIONS ON WHAT TO TAKE

General

In general American tourists should keep in mind the extreme hospitality and friendliness of the people whom they shall be meeting in the USSR and Eastern Europe, and in particular the almost invariable practice of presenting a small gift in the form of a personal memento to a foreign traveler, even after very short acquaintance. Also, in view of the extreme pride and sensitivity of many whom you will meet, it is a good rule of thumb to keep personal gifts on a modest level, since reciprocation on their part would involve expenses far beyond the comparable value of the American tourist's gift.

Since home visits in these countries demand an outlay on the part of the hosts far beyond the cost of entertaining in the USA (in some cases close to the monthly salary of the host) Americans should be prepared to reciprocate as generously as possible in these situations.

Small Personal Gifts.

Souvenir lapel buttons from different cities and organizations; American soaps, razors and razor blades, lipsticks, smaller cosmetic items; souvenir colored picture postcards, (preferably from the tourist's home town), road maps locating tourist's home, guidebooks to tourist's home town; personal snap shots, showing tourist, his home, family, or place of work, recreation, etc.; cigarettes, souvenir match-books, nail clippers key-chains, cigarette-holders, pocket pencil sharpeners; scotch tape, band-aids, plastic rain hats or aprons; instant foods (coffee, soups, cake mixes, etc.); American campaign buttons or coins; plastic baby bottle; small can openers.

More Substantial Gifts for Friends of Longer Acquaintance

The World Almanac, Information Please Almanac, UN Statistical Yearbook, UN World Economic Survey; good paperbacks on American history and current cultural, political, social, and other topics in the USA; good American and English fiction, particularly contemporary; paperback books on art, with colored illustrations; magazines on home-making and fashion; travel, hunting, sports, camping and sailing publications; office manuals; art and photography magazines; news magazines; magazines on science, mechanics, and do-it-yourself; good English-Russian phrasebooks and English pronouncing dictionaries; children's books in English; Sunday editions of American newspapers, especially the classified section; any catalogues or other descriptive materials relating to your institution, company or special interests; materials from local and national election campaigns; inexpensive but good costume jewelry (e.g. "poppet" bracelets and necklaces); good lingerie items; good ball-point pens (with refills) and cigarette lighters (with extra flints and fluids); dress patterns, ribbons for trimming, button sets; book covers (plain plastic or with university seal); good long-play records, particularly jazz and modern serious composers.

Items Recommended as Good "Props" for Initiating Conversation

A Polaroid Land camera; transistor radio or record player; magazines and newspapers; lapel pins or name plates, personal cards (in English and Russian); American cigarettes; personal snapshots and colored postcards.

And, of course, For Your Own Use

All the soap, shampoo, cosmetics, toilet articles, facial tissues, and film that you plan to use; flat sink stoppers; washcloth and perhaps a towel; any drugs and medicines you take regularly, plus some preparation for mild dysentery; phrasebook and pocket dictionary.